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ABSTRACT

This 2-year study of the effectiveness and quality of continuing professional education (CPE) in the United Kingdom identified policy implementation issues resulting from recent government policies and economic imperatives which have given rise to a "new managerialism" which is changing the organizational culture of higher education including CPE. The study interviewed 40 tutors and over 60 students from 14 departments involved in continuing education at 9 different universities. Tutors taught in the areas of: building and construction, health and safety, teacher/lecturer education, geographical sciences, counseling, management, educational management, leisure and outdoor activities, and law. The tutors and students were interviewed in semi-structured formats, some students were interviewed in groups, and five small scale case studies were done of tutors' work. Students were in courses ranging from single-day training events to 2-year part time masters degrees programs. The study found a significant gap between the rhetoric of existing prescriptions for CPE effectiveness and quality and the "actuality" of CPE. In particular the study found that the "new managerialism" must take into account four features central to effective implementation of their policies: (1) tutors' and students' perspectives; (2) tutors' values and practices and issues of change; (3) the market influences on developing CPE; and (4) the contribution of course evaluation to developing CPE. (Contains 13 references.) (JB)

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Effectiveness and quality in continuing professional education: a critical examination of the interface between policy and practice in UK Universities.

Paper presented at SRHE conference 1993

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Title Effectiveness and quality in continuing professional education: a critical examination of the interface between policy and practice in UK Universities.

Introduction

This paper sets out to discuss four policy implementation issues arising from a two year project which focussed upon the effectiveness and quality of continuing professional education. The work revealed that those who promote what has been loosely described as the 'new managerialism' in HE need to take into account four features central to the effective implementation of their policies.

i) tutors' and students' perspectives
ii) tutors' values and practices: issues of change
iii) the 'market' influences on developing CPE
iv) the contribution of course evaluation to developing CPE

The research findings revealed a significant gap between the rhetoric of existing prescriptions for developing its effectiveness or quality and the 'actuality' of CPE.Descriptions of this gap are not new, either from the perspective of the new managerialists, de Wit (1992) and Burrows et al (1992) or from traditionalists defending existing practices and processes. The intention here is not to replicate the arguments from either side of this debate but rather to examine the tensions between the two in current educational, economic and political contexts.

What counts as the 'new managerialism' in the context of the present changes happening in HE institutions is difficult to define. It is in part the general response by HE to government policies, and economic imperatives, to create new management cultures and systems which can meet the demands of a HE sector which has until recently been exhorted to expand to meet the demands of the political economy. This sector now has to be more publically accountable, in particular to its funding agencies, and more overtly relevant to the needs of individuals, and the wider economy, as represented by employers, by offering a higher quality and more effective, provision. At a general level therefore it marks a move away from previously collectivist and consensual organisational culture to a more "managerial stance' (Moodie 1991). The new managerialism can be equated with an increase in centralised management and the setting up of information, accounting, and quality systems which allow for increased 'managerial efficiency'.

The move towards centralized management in institutions previously marked by academic autonomy and individual professional integrity could

potentially lead to a number of serious conflicts. These are not generally addressed in the literature where rather optimistically, a form of symbiosis between the individual and the systems is generally envisaged,

> *"while individual professional integrity must remain the cornerstone it should be supported by suitable institution-wide and system-wide procedures and that individuals and institutions should be able to demonstrate their commitment to maintaining and raising the quality of their work* (Williams and Loder, 1990)

At present the area which seems to be generating the most discussion both theoretically and in our fieldwork is that of quality, and already it is starting to create its own backlash,

> *"One of the recent fashions in higher education is a concern, almost an obsession with 'quality'. It is, of course a central concern of academic institutions that the courses and services offered are of high quality, but the current obsession is driven by this legitimate requirement than by the imposition by governments of structures and mechanisms for demonstrating 'quality assurance', with financial implications... The mechanisms thus imposed. however threaten quality as much as enhance it, precisely because they tend to be mechanistic. In particular they threaten to exclude a key component of quality assurance - judgement."* (Editorial, Higher Education Review 1993)

The quality movement is something of a microcosm of the managerialism/ traditionalist argument. Quality from the new managerialist perspective is to be improved by a move towards explicit systems and structures, agreement over institutional aims and direct management intervention into the organisational and strategic development of the HEI on the basis of non-academic grounds such as cost and market conditions.

> *"So what are the requirements for HEI's if they intend to take quality as a serious issue? In essence they can be summarized as:*
> *commitment to quality at all levels*
> *technical structures imposed to facilitate this commitment*
> *new information strategies*
> *networking across functional divisions*
> *relating quality to the mission statement "* (McElwee and Pennington 1993)

In the rest of this paper the issue of quality, along with effectiveness, efficiency and accountability are discussed in the light of their present, and

likely, impact upon tutors and students roles in continuing professional education (CPE). We draw in this paper on our work in the project with approximately forty tutors and over sixty students from fourteen departments involved in continuing education in nine different universities. We concentrate though on the experiences of 21 tutors and approximately 30 students who were involved in continuing professional education (CPE). We interviewed CPE tutors who taught in the areas of; building and construction, health and safety, teacher/lecturer education, geographical sciences, counselling, management, educational management, leisure and outdoor activities, and law.

The tutors and students we interviewed were on courses ranging from 'training' events lasting a single day to two year part time masters degrees. Although we do differentiate on occasions between training and education courses in the paper in actuality many tutors taught on both types of courses and although differences existed in their approaches to these two types of courses their was also a great deal of commonality. Students were asked about the specific courses they were taught by the tutors we had already interviewed but the issues they raised often went beyond a single course and reflected their concerns over their longer term professional development.

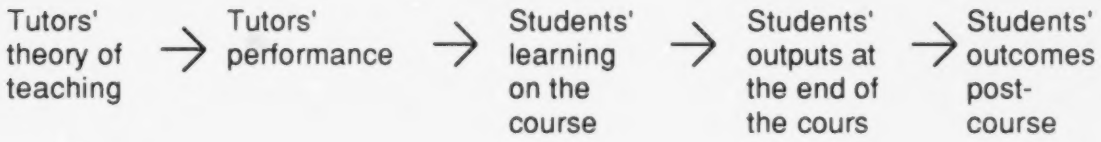
We initially concentrated on one hour semi-structured interviews with tutors and students but as the research progressed we carried out five small scale case studies of tutors work and carried out a number of group interviews with students.

Issue One - Tutors' and students' perspectives

Tutors' perspectives

The project sought students and tutors' perspectives on areas associated with the effectiveness and quality of course processes, outputs, and long term outcomes. In doing so mismatches within, and between, tutors' traditional practices and new managerial policies concerning student roles in improving the effectiveness of CPE became increasingly obvious.

The tutors in our sample perceived their primary responsibility as the processes of teaching. They relied upon their individual personal professional theories as the basis for their judgements concerning its quality and effectiveness. Whilst there was a 'tutor as educationalist' recognition of the students' active role in influencing the learning milieu, evaluations of outcomes based for example, on indicators of student satisfaction, were relatively impotent in influencing the professional judgements of the 'tutor as practitioner'. Course outputs were seen as poor indicators of tutor effectiveness or quality because they were mediated by, for example, the students' biography intentions and capabilities. Longer term outcomes were seen as the entire responsibility of the student and, where appropriate, their employer organization. In summary student outcomes although of interest to the tutor were seen as distant from their performance because of the perceived weak causal links between teaching and learning;


Tutors' theory of teaching
Tutors' performance
Students' learning on the course
Students' outputs at the end of the cours
Students' outcomes post-course

From the perspective of the new managerialist policy makers this bifurcated approach to enhancing the effectiveness, and developing the quality, of the teaching/learning relationship is a limited and unnecessary mystification of the process of CPE. Indeed, the main thrust of reform seeks to make direct links between student outputs and teaching effectiveness:

> *Outcomes are in many ways the most important aspects to examine. One may ask what is the matter if the teacher is poor, the environment is inappropriate and the organization appalling as long as the outcomes are achieved. Standards in this area need to sate in measurable terms what is expected to be achieved. However, while outcomes in relation to student learning through a total course or unit of study may be identified through examination or course work results, outcomes in relation to a specific teaching method are more difficult to measure. It is not always easy to relate learning*

outcomes to specific interventions." (Boore p.205 1993)

with an emphasis upon 'value added's in quality control and curriculum development principles and processes. With the exceptions of the move towards learning contracts, in some parts of CPE, these value added's are still primarily defined by the trainer, tutor, or employer, rather than the student. There remains also a reticence to look at longer term outcomes because of the technical problems and costs involved.Whilst there is a growing conflict, then, between the culture of most teaching tutors' and that of the increasingly active interventionist culture of the new managerialists policy makers our own empirical research suggests that the students' (or clients) perspective continues to be ignored.

Students' perspectives

The students we interviewed described the limitations of existing practices which presently are not adequately dealt with even by the new approaches. They were; i) a failure to recognize, and legitimate during and after the training and development experience the full range of outcomes gained from CPE ii) a limited recognition by tutors of students' contribution to the teaching/learning process, and iii) a failure to appreciate and interact during courses with students' concerns with the achievement of outcomes in a range of relationships and contexts.

i) The discussion of outcomes has been limited by the emphasis given to 'value added' as a measure of effectiveness of CPE. This notion gains its validity from the belief that an individual career is characterised by a series of incremental improvements and that the purpose of CPE is to contribute to these increments. On interviewing students we found that their courses provided them with not only new knowledge, information and skills but also the opportunity to work through professional and personal problems, to re-charge intellectual and emotional batteries, and enhance their sense of professional self worth. Whilst knowledge, information and skills formed the explicit agenda of tutors' work, these other 'affective' areas did not.

   The failure to recognize explicitly these vital cathartic and therapeutic processes and outcomes, which help students maintain their professional motivation and commitment as well as competence, had a number of negative consequences. Students themselves were unclear whether these types of learning outcomes were legitimate; and over emphasised the instrumental outcomes of CPE such as its role in promotion or career advancement. This ambiguity often generated, also, a sense of frustration and a limited notion of CPE's potential role in the overall management of human resource by

employers, purchasers, and individual students.

ii) The students' role in the development of the effectiveness and quality of teaching/learning processes is recognised in both traditional and innovatory approaches but in both cases it tends to be limited to the function of providing feedback for tutors on their performance. Certainly within our fieldwork students perceived evaluation as being for the good of the tutors but rarely of direct benefit to themselves. Developments in broadening definitions of learning outcomes, (Otter, 1989), and learning contracts, (Stephenson and Laycock,1993), have begun to address these and other issues by supporting students in the selection of courses and recognizing their active role in their learning, but neither of these focus upon support for developing the students understanding of the quality and effectiveness of their in-course contributions nor how they might build upon these.

The importance of good quality decision making within complex teaching and learning processes has not been applied to students performances with as much vigour as it has to those of tutors. This has created a situation in which many CPE students are not able to combine or connect the differing forms of learning they have experienced, especially those which have occurred informally or experientially in their work, with those which occurred in more formal learning situations. In our field work it was relatively rare to come across students who were able to recognize and manage these. Those who did often held fairly stereotypical views of relationships between what was 'on offer' in the formal learning situation and what could be gained from other sources.

iii) The research revealed that students' discussions of quality and effectiveness extended far beyond their formal time boundaries of individual courses. Their comments revealed concerns with the achievement of outcomes as they applied to a range of different relationships and situations which extended far beyond increased knowledge, skills and career development. Nor was effectiveness from the students perspective perceived as being assessed solely on the basis of the teacher/learner relationship.

Some tutors, especially those involved in providing specific training opportunities, have recognised the importance of focussing the work upon the context to which the students return after it has been completed. These tutors spend time educating students about knowledge/learning transference problems and just as importantly build in meetings with the students' employers and the purchasers of training which focus upon issues of support for students on their

return to work. According to our evidence these issues are not addressed in the more 'educationally orientated ' courses. Although support of this kind would be more complex to arrange, and difficult to fund, many of the students we interviewed felt they were inadequately supported in achieving personal outcomes, even at the most basic level of help in dealing with the lag between the recognition and achievement of their own learning by themselves, and the providing institution, and its recognition and valuing by employers.

The issues surrounding the long term achievement of personal outcomes are particularly pertinent in an economic climate where students may need to move between jobs, often not voluntarily, and where their managers may often be perceived as having strong alternative agendas about training or education which may clash with those of the students. The tensions between organisational and individual need, the effective use of CPE, and its long term management by students and employers, represents probably the most neglected area in the debate on quality and effectiveness in CPE.

Summary

The research, then, reveals a picture of CPE provision which at present fails to meet a number of the significant student and employer articulated needs and requirements. If CPE is to operate in what Kenway et al (1993) describe as, a post-Fordist society it will need to prepare students to operate in an economy marked by

> *"fragmented niche markets, general flexible machinery, multi-skilled workers, 'human relations' management strategy, decentralized local or plant level bargaining, geographically new industrial districts, flexible specialist communities"* (Bagguley, 1991)

and therefore will need to help develop a highly educated, flexible, and 'entrepreneurial' workforce

> *" [to] not only produce 'enterprising individuals' for the 'enterprise' culture they are trying to effect, but also produce the types of individuals who have the attitudes and competencies appropriate to an emergent and anticipated post-Fordist economy. ...Vocationally orientated education ('vocational progressivism') is to develop in students 'flexible competencies and a pre-disposition to change."* (Kenway et al 1993)

The current reality is that many students are faced with having to carry out, or pay for, much of the management of their learning and needs analysis which traditionally would have been carried out by employers. The challenge presented to those providing CPE is to offer a more holistic service which offers comprehensive careers and academic guidance and which helps students develop their ability to recognize and plan for their own education and continuing development and training needs.

Issue Two - Tutors' values and practices: issues of change

If we accept the managerialist conceptualisation of how the 'average' HE tutor presently defines their role, and how these tutors need to act to meet the demands of the new mass HE sector, then they will need to change their values and practices dramatically. The changes are dramatic because tutors are conceptualized historically as autonomous academics who are primarily interested in their own research, who have traditionally worked independently of both management and the market, and who define themselves more in terms of the professional groups to which they belong than the organization for which they work.

Interviews with over twenty tutors across nine 'old' and 'new' universities demonstrated major discrepancies between the conceptualisation of roles and functions of the 'average' HE tutor , as described in policy documents such as the Jarrat Report (1985) and the very different 'average' CPE tutor, we interviewed in our field work, not surprising, perhaps, because of their different functions. The first major discrepancy is that CPE tutors placed a strong emphasis on their teaching and relatively less on their research. Not only did they tend to define themselves as teachers,

> *" I believe that you don't teach a subject you teach people and what ever area you specialise in - that it is a metaphor for life"* (CEEP 62)

> *" the courses I take best are the new ones - I think I go through a semi-learning process - I'm a teacher before I am an academic"* (CEEP 65)

but they also perceived themselves as part of the teaching elite within the institution because of the range and variety of students they worked with

> *I think for that in a way that you could argue perhaps at undergraduate level people could get away without too much flack, coming back there are some people for that very reason who perhaps wouldn't be as suited to do in-service work. That's my view I've held for a long time really I suppose, that it demands certain qualities, that you probably also need at other levels but perhaps you can get away without having to such an extent* (CEEP 113)

CPE tutors were also already market and 'customer' orientated because they tended to run short training events and full cost, non-accredited courses, which by their nature are customer and market sensitive. A number of staff in CPE were working on part-time and short term contracts

which were based upon them generating sufficient income to keep themselves employed. In fact current CPE culture currently mirrors many of the structural and cultural requirements which the new managerialism saw as necessary.

Organisationally the CPE tutors we interviewed had often deliberately broken away from university controlled systems of management, by creating their own administrative systems, marketing schemes and quality control programmes, because they believed the universities systems were not of sufficiently high standard. In fact a substantive counter culture existed with CPE tutors not only doubting the competency of the institution but also that of their colleagues. This was reflected partially in the considerable use made of outside experts and part-time staff. The accompanying sense of isolation had been exacerbated by the move by many institutions to treat CPE units as profit centres and by the new contractual arrangements for tutors.

Strategically the aims of the new managerialism include a commitment to increase the availability and relevance of HE to a wider groups of users on the assumption that this will result in an increase in the provision of CPE, in both existing and new markets. This move to expand provision threatens the traditional approaches to quality assurance in CPE, generally based on small co-hesive units and teams having a good understanding of each others practices and close personal ties with their customers. It also challenges their traditional perceptions of themselves as not simply selling a service but also being a resource for their professional community.

Expansion into new markets raises ethical questions in regard to the place of HE in the CPE market. Concern was expressed in interviews with tutors over rapid expansion into 'soft' market areas purely for reasons of income generation, being in unfair competition with private consultancies and training firms, and the accompanying loss of the distinctive flavour of university based CPE.

The value sets of many CPE tutors have been created in different institutional contexts and within a different professional ethos than that which now pervades areas of HE. The changes required of CPE tutors cannot be so easily defined once we move away from the rather crude blanket definitions of the roles and functions of the average HE academic tutor contained in a number of the reports and policy documents which have recently been published. The strength, and range, of existing values in areas such as tutors relationship with clients and their approach to teaching may ironically make CPE tutors more resistant to the new initiatives than mainstream tutors. When this is added to the extending range of situations in which tutors operate it presents a very complex picture of necessary value changes involved in the implementation of new policies designed to increase effectiveness.

Even assuming a willingness to change to accomplish this re-orientation, tutors will have to find ways to make explicit what are often implicit values that underpin their work in order to find ways of integrating their espoused values with institutional mission statements or at least accommodating them. Making explicit these values, and the professional judgements and decisions they give rise to, is an important aspect in the practical integration of the tutors work, as it helps both tutors and managers monitor, evaluate, and coordinate their practice. Research reveals, however, that this is a complex task which may require time and support.

Issue Three - The role and influence of the market in the development of CPE

In all public sector based organisations a new awareness of, and increasing dependence on, markets has been forced by government policies. In tune with the broad thrust of new managerialism's intention to increase the quality of the universities provision by improving its fitness for purpose, HE institutions have set out to increase their awareness of the importance and nature of the educational, and wider, markets.The higher education institutions' response to so called market forces has tested some of the strengths and weaknesses of CPE in terms of enhancing effectiveness and improving quality. It has demonstrated the difficulties of dealing with new purchasers and players in the market, and developing relationships with clients whose approach to training and education varies in its sophistication. It has also revealed the limited capability of universities to influence and shape the markets upon which they must now, increasingly, depend.

Tutors for their part must now ensure that they too are more responsive to customer needs and that they involve them in the planning and delivery of courses,

> *"Assessment of customers' needs is part of curriculum development. It might include a specific analysis of the training needs of a particular organization. Contracts with potential customers require well trained enquiry officers, helpful publicity, and sometimes joint planning meetings. .... The customer must be involved in course evaluation and review procedures."* (de Wit 1992)

It is claimed, also, that the effectiveness of the universities' provision will be enhanced if they use their market awareness to inform their strategic decision making. For the individual tutor this means them having to respond more quickly, become more entrepreneurial and opportunistic and at the same time continue to provide a high quality product customised to individual needs,

> *"We decided we weren't going to go in the direction of off the shelf model of providing courses. The collarly of that was that we were going to have to spend time on needs assessment so by trial and error we developed a modus operandi for a new client particularly which would certain;y involve one substantial briefing meeting "*
> (CEEP 114)

The impact of this is

> *"Competitive self interest is now what characterises relationships between tertiary institutions and increasingly amongst academics, who are encouraged to market their 'intellectual property' to sponsors from business and industry."* (Kenway et al 1993)

The tutor's role is no longer based on historical concepts of academic freedom and tenure in a context of informal management systems. Its' effectiveness is now directly related to the adherence to explicit business plans and the accompanying requirement, and ability, to negotiate and accommodate the needs and wants of a wide range of others in their professional practice.

This leads to what could be seen as a relational view of quality and effectiveness of HE based upon external markets and internal standards rather than upon the judgement of the professional groups to which the tutors belong.

> *"'What is quality in higher education?'... The answer, in my view, lies in the interaction between the expectations of interested parties ... and is clearly multidimensional, perhaps it is more appropriate to think in terms of qualities, rather than in terms of a monolithic concept of quality, in a manner analogous to thinking in terms of the optimisation of a set of institutional effectivenesses."* (Yorke 1992)

We observed very different perceived levels of expertise in marketing, and awareness of the educational market, ranging from a long history of partnership with local and national and business to new innovative courses aimed at fragmented markets. At the time of this research even those with substantial expertise were not giving a high priority to issues of effectiveness and quality, because tutors by their own admission were busy having to cope with very changeable educational markets. At the same time, directives from within institutions, which had led to calls for an increase in revenue from CE providers through, for example, the development of a different student profile to justify continuing funding, had placed pressures on tutors to expand not only their existing markets but to develop new ones. Relatively few markets existed where purchasers decision to buy training was influenced by the providers approach to quality and the quality systems they had in place, and therefore there was little direct relationship for providers between developing such systems and increasing their market share. In the main tutors concentrated on the more basic aspects of marketing, selling and recruitment to increase their market.

In the 'new' public sector one of the major impacts of this changed relationship with external markets has been that training budgets have

been devolved to smaller units and often to staff who were inexperienced in carrying out training needs analysis and negotiating training

> *The big sea change we are facing now I see is that with the demise of LEA's as central purchasing agents effectively, and the fragmentation of expenditure. Our model of needs assessment is exploding out of the middle so we are getting a lot more individualised, like working with one school. But at the other end of the spectrum if we are not able to negotiate large scale packages with LEA';s we're increasingly advertising nationally,"* (CEEP 114)

Alongside this as these units became responsible for their own budgets these were placed under great scrutiny. This led to a re-consideration of what could be achieved, and measured, the type of partnerships providers and purchasers wished to develop, and the cost benefits of these. In addition at the very moment when HE was being exhorted to extend their work with the private sector, the influence of the recession tended to depress demand for large scale programmes of training and education, and paradoxically increased the influence of individual students, and professional bodies.

The CPE providers response to these market changes has tended to be the modification of existing practices rather than the adoption of new approaches. Accommodating these market changes has proved more difficult for those providers who have traditionally relied on a small number of purchasers or who have tended to run repeat courses within the same market sector. Without the wider perspective provided by experience of working in different sectors of the market or with different types of purchasers HE has found it difficult to respond adequately because;

i) they have failed to place the changes they are observing in the context of the market they are working within, which has therefore made it difficult to assess their importance or to understand likely future development

ii) they have not developed sufficiently proactive marketing approaches, or ways of funding more extensive marketing, which would allow them to identify new opportunities.

iii) they are relatively inexperienced in carrying out negotiations with a range of purchasers and funders against a background of radical changes to the way in which training is being delivered.

iii) they do not have sufficient flexibility in their existing provision

to allow them to balance the reduction of those areas which were no viable by expand those aspects which were.

The more traditional, and relatively successful, approaches to marketing in CPE was for the interested individual entrepreneurial tutor to carry out "marketing by wandering around". As part of their wanderings tutors sat on various professional bodies, met with colleagues at both social and business events all of which established them in the professional community and allowed them to adopt a very unobtrusive form of marketing. They slowly built up contacts, and moved into informal consultancies, by bringing individuals on to courses and providing facilities and services at minimal or no cost to purchasers. This approach fitted into the culture of training/education purchasers which was based around on 'hiring an individual rather an institution'. It was particularly appropriate for tutors whose training was provided in the locality of the university, where there was easy access to an organised professional group which had the power to commission training, and when the tutor could generate sufficient income from their training to subsidise the amount of time they were involved in the consultancy activities which did not directly generate any income.

One limitation of this approach was that it was slow to develop, and therefore not effective in the short term for new comers to a market. It only appeared to work where a well structured, and accessible, local market already existed. The marketing information it created also tended to remain with individual tutors and was not disseminated further. The reluctance to share market information sometimes reflected a mistrust by tutors in the way other tutors worked and sensitivity over the reaction of hard earned clients to being approached by others. These market contacts and loyalties were also a source of power for individual tutors. The loss of just one or two tutors could effectively 'blind' a department's CPE provision to what was happening in its market. For these reasons and a number of others it was also treated with suspicion by university managers. In this kind of context the reluctance of these tutors to enter into more transparent and formalised marketing systems was understandable.

Examples of innovatory approaches which addressed the issue of the move towards more individualised markets were encountered;

i) the creative use of conferences and existing student populations as a cheap source of market research even including their use as focus groups to discuss the curricula and its delivery.

ii) the use of new distance learning methods, such as computer based courses with telephone help lines, which were appropriate when dealing with thinly spread markets.

iii) partnerships with a range of institutions and organisations which not only enhanced the status of courses but provided training sites across the country.

Again these innovations were based on the actions and inclinations of individual tutors and were poorly supported at an institutional level.

At present many tutors' ability to deal with the changing markets they operate within are being restricted by both the traditional lack of emphasis placed on marketing, and the type of expertise that does exist being appropriate to only a limited number of markets and tutors.The lack of any co-ordinated marketing mechanism has also meant that the costs of more expensive approaches could not be spread across departments. Individual tutors were severely hampered by this in their desire to create new markets, they had problems in carrying out adequate market research and knowing what was the most appropriate form of advertising.

Issue Four - The contribution of course evaluation to developing CPE

The extent, and nature, of the utilization of course evaluation to inform the teaching/learning process by tutors will depend, according to Fish (1991) on their conception of themselves as either 'rational technicians' or 'professional artists'.

The technical rationalist conception is favoured by the new managerialists. Here the tutor is seen as adopting a neo-Tylerian approach to curriculum development. This is based on pre-specified course outcomes, designing and delivering a course to achieve these outcomes. Evaluation is based on the achievement of outcomes which will, it is assumed, lead to improvements in practice. It is a technical approach to curriculum development because it is based on the improvements of techniques and methods which are perceived as being amenable to 'fine tuning' on the basis of evaluative information which is readily transferable from one situation to another. It is a rational approach in that tutors are perceived as working with clearly defined outcomes. Evaluation of these can be related directly to course processes. Tutors therefore have a clear understanding of both context and process which are unproblematic.

The 'professional artists' perspective on the other hand, stresses ethical as well as technical improvement ,

> *"professionals make judgements about the appropriate course of action in a given situation. Wise actions means making the best judgement in a specific context and for a specified set of ethical beliefs. These judgements are evaluated as best against what is possible in the specific circumstances in which they occur and what is desirable within a particular ethical framework."* (Barnett 1992)

It also views the tutors relationship with their context and teaching processes differently. The tutors are conceptualised as understanding that perforce they operate with necessarily incomplete data in a complex situation. Tutors therefore have to work with information which can be contradictory, confusing and incomplete, which is likely to produce a form of understanding which is 'probabilistic' rather than 'predictive' and which means therefore they have to rely upon their professional judgements,

> *" 'Professional ' work is characterised as follows. The work is complex: the practitioner has to respond to novel situations which he must analyze and categorise. Typically he will have to work with incomplete or inchoate information. This requires judgement. Crucial to this definition is that the practitioner calls upon a body of theoretical knowledge to inform such*

> *judgements and is guided in his judgements by a set of ethics. Also crucial to the definition is that the connection between the response is not absolute; that is, the effect of action taken or treatment offered is not predictable except in the probabilistic terms. This distinguishes the expert occupation from the craft, where the connection between the action taken and its effect is more certain."* (Piper 1992)

Professional judgements are based on implicit and contextualised knowledge with carries with it notions of connoisseurship, prudence and aesthetic judgement which are not reducible to the criteria or mechanistic evaluative processes associated with the technically rationalist perspective.

Tutors in CPE described to us practices and personal philosophies which, whilst on occasions contained a mixture of both perspectives, were generally much closer to the 'professional judgement approach' than the technically rationalist. The tutors relied upon intuitive formative assessments about the teaching and learning process,

> *I spend quite a lot of time looking at students how they're relating to each other and the tutor. I listen a lot a coffee time, I get there early and watch them assemble, see what time they get there, see what time the tutor gets there, see what kind of conversation is going on. Because those aren't part of the formal teaching process. The ease of the relationship, the readiness which the students feels she can approach the tutor, the extent to which the students are talking t each other and not just the tutor. I guess what I'm looking for is that part of the success of a tutor is someone who can establish a relationship with a group that can also help a group to establish relationships within itself.* (CEEP 36)

rather than about outcomes

> *" In fact I have very little knowledge of what they do after the course - I do not know if they are avid psychology readers or to what extent it has changed their lives- though it would be nice to look further"* (CEEP 27)

> *"it is an inevitable of all education, that there will be life changes ... I tend to give them the key elements and then they make choices"* (CEEP 66)

They preferred to use 'informal' feedback from students about the process

"What seems very informal but is actually the most powerful part of the feedback system is that we like to feel we encourage an atmosphere in the session where people can give feedback,in the group setting particularly the sort of discussion that emerges from the end of a three hour workshop and I see that as the most productive in terms of developing the course. (CEEP 20)

than the types of information provided by formal evaluations

at the end of each module or term, we tend to dish out the standard type or evaluation sheets which we give to the students. I am very pessimistic about their value, we tend to get a very good press, most things sort of tend towards the mean, which is probably true of most evaluations of courses (CEEP 20)

Tutors had had difficulties in making explicit their personal theories about evaluation which at times meant they presented a confused account. This limited their ability to reach agreement with colleagues over even the broad areas they were looking at in making evaluative judgments. For example here is one tutors reply to the question of what kinds of evaluative information they looked for,

Its a good question ... it forces me to make explicit things that I'm not sure we've thought through as carefully as we should have done. Well I suppose to try and make what comes natural more explicit to you , but it would be a mixture of the positive and negatives .But yes if you feel that you are recognising some kind of confirmation of the quality of what you are doing, the levels of demands all those sorts of things in terms of pleasing, rewarding, surprisingly good, encouraging types of reactions from people, which would include evaluations that they offer, the impact of the work back at there school situations and all that sort of thing. (CEEP 26)

The reliance upon informal judgements and intuitive data collection seemed to contradict tutors' own beliefs about the kind, and quality, of interaction between teaching process knowledge gained from student feedback and their own 'expert' subject knowledge,

It is very difficult to come to terms with the fact that as the teacher you are almost certainly the expert, so that you may have reasons for doing things which contradict what the class wants, which you wouldn't want to change because you believe that that is part of what makes a rounded topic. If somebody finds my session a bad session I now have enough confidence that what I'm doing has got some value .. so I can

cope with negative comments ... but there are other sessions where I don't have that confidence and that's much harder. (CEEP 24)

A lack of confidence in their personal theories of evaluation, or their inability to fully articulate it, also increased the tutors' sensitivity to negative criticism and their tendency to deny problems, or project them on to others.

I suppose as you are always looking for negatives instances and surprises and therefore if you are true to your commitments in this way take the negative case or surprising point of view on its merits . As an individual you would not try, hopefully, to force them into some kind of prescribed category. But there is always a temptation to do that isn't there? "Oh we let you on the course without as much professional experience maybe as we would normally like". You have certain sort of catch categories I suppose where you mentally might fit somebody, which enables you to blame them rather than the course (CEEP 26)

The psychology of tutors' responses to evaluative information has not been extensively explored but the interviews revealed a significant minority of tutors who found criticism not only difficult to accept with but also very stressful.

"because of the nature of what we do when we re getting people to examine there own behaviour and possibly thinking about changing their behaviour and you can interpret , we can interpret negative criticism as resistance to change now this is the Catch 22 this is the sort of double bind that a psychoanalyst could place on a patient whatever they do is wrong and whatever we do is right, which may not be the case" .(CEEP 20)

The relationship between evaluative feedback and curriculum development was also seen as problematic because of the highly contextualised knowledge it represented. There was a lack of confidence about its validity beyond the context in which it was generated, hence the preference for using it as a means of 'phasing and pacing' on-going learning rather than to consider its relevance to the next course.

The difficulty tutors had in assessing the quality of their judgements was exacerbated by their relative isolation. There were few opportunities for tutors to work with colleagues and therefore to discuss their judgements with colleagues who had a comparable understanding of the educational context and process. It was even rarer was to find a group of tutors who felt

they could be honest and critical with each other without causing offence. This culture of separation, of individualism, as in schools, acted against professional and curriculum growth.

Summary

Most tutors' existing personal theories have tended to lead to a broad rejection of externally imposed, mechanistic technical rational quality systems and initiatives, mainly because they felt them to be based on over simplistic links between teaching, learning, and outputs. There was a wide spread preference amongst tutors interviewed for observation by peers, and reliance on implicit and contextualised criteria and professional judgements as the preferred model by which quality and effectiveness could be enhanced

> *Either we evaluate where we go next with this individual, or what we do with this next time, what do we do with it. I think we do that, very definitely based on probably a fairly intuitive evaluation of what went on in one week, well I think we ought to deal with these issues because they seem to be important issues for the group, or I think we ought to stop doing the session we planned and just try and develop what we were doing the previous week , because it hasn't been developed enough for people to draw meaningful conclusions from what we've done. It's a very intuitive process* ." (CEEP 20)

Tutors felt that the criteria used within the new systems reflected managements needs and interests rather than their own or their students,

> *Very often things are written not for students but for the person who is scrutinising and it causes anxiety which tutors and staff tend to address by over elaborate readings lists with inappropriate books in order to show that they know the materials and can impress you"* (CEEP 29)

The tutors' commitment to their teaching had led them to develop a considerable degree of professional pride in what they did, and on occasions to adopt a counter-cultural stance with regards to the rest of the institution and management which they felt undervalued the complexity and sophistication of their work.

Effectiveness

The tutors' approach to effectiveness emphasised their relationships with colleagues, clients, and students. For these tutors the achievement of their professional outcomes was an inseperable part of these relationships and

mainly achieved through them. The professional images the tutors had of themselves were frequently based on the ability to establish and develop good working relationships with others,

> *"What I admire in other lecturers.. Words like leadership, responsiveness, empathy, understanding, flexibility, goodness - all these things come out in the ideal lecturer"* (CEEP 37)

The impact this had upon their approach to effectiveness and quality was to make it essentially process orientated, based upon informal monitoring and improving the development of these relationships, with outcomes, or more specifically course outputs coming a distant second in terms of providing the kind of feedback and information they required. It was this focus on the processes and relationships of teaching which led to the tutors approach to effectiveness being termed 'relational', not in the macro sense used by Yorke (1984), but in terms of the personal and professional webs of relations that the tutors entered into as a consequence of their extended professional role.

This project revealed therefore that the perceived tutor's overall effectiveness was based on the skilful management and co-ordination of internal and external roles and relationships, in which they themselves rather than students or management defined and developed what was counted as good practice. Paradoxically this involved a maintenance of traditional teacher/student power and authority relationships, which could be regarded by the new managerialism as implying increasingly limited and diminishing levels of effectiveness.

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